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For 1878.
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The Daily Press.

HONGKONG, OCTOBER 31st, 1878.

The numerously signed Memorial handed on Tuesday to His Excellency the GOVERNOR FOR presentation to the QUEEN is, we presume, intended in some sort as a counterblast to the resolutions of the public meeting of the 7th instant. We are not acquainted with the contents of the memorial, but may fairly conclude that its purpose

was the opposition of the resolutions passed at the meeting. Putting aside, however, its drift for the moment, we fear must admire the industry which effected such a result as the collection of 2,262 signatures to the memorial. The question remains, how was this accomplished? Was the memorial a spontaneous expression of opinion and feeling, or was it brought about by a systematic perversion of facts? The native medical practitioners seem have been prominent in promoting the movement, but who pulled the wires in the first instance? It originated, we learn, in a druggist's shop much frequented by petty Chinese officials—other boys, interpreters, &c., and the document was written by some literary graduates of Canton. Chinese officials on the mainland are always ready to do anything to give trouble to Hongkong merchants, and it is very possible that their influence has also been at work in the matter. An unfortunate misunderstanding has arisen between the foreign and native communities in reference to the public meeting alluded to before, due solely to the misrepresentations of a few interested individuals. We regret to be compelled to repeat this well known fact in the face of the complaints of our two native correspondents who echo each other in asserting that the statement is "a gross insult to their intelligence." There has always hitherto been uncertainty and discord between the British at Tengtui and the native sections of the community, and it is to be deplored that the apple of discord should have been thrown among them after thirty years of harmony. The Chinese are, however, far too sensible to long believe that the British and foreign residents entertain any other than the most friendly feelings towards them, spite of the attempts made by designing persons to convince them to the contrary. When the present agitation has died out they will perhaps remember that it was an attack upon a Chinese borg that brought to a culmination the public indignation at the lawless state of the Colony, engendered by the absurdly tender treatment of criminals, who, if they were handed over to their own countrymen to be dealt with, would have short shrift indeed. A totally false issue has, however, been placed before them, and we cannot wonder, under the circumstances, that they should have been so easily misled.

It may be that we have surmised wrongly as to the purport of the memorial presented on Tuesday, and we most sincerely hope that this is the case; but, if not, the secrecy in which the whole affair has been shrouded affords a striking contrast to the public which characterised the action of the European residents, and is in thorough keeping with the nefarious attempt to pack the City Hall on the 7th inst. The small but respectable shopkeepers, &c., who signed the memorial to the Mayor were to blame for fixing their chops to the document, which no doubt they did with characteristic complacency when requested to do so. We cannot, however, look upon the presentation of the document as a spontaneous expression of the loyalty of Chinese to Her Majesty which the GOVERNOR is so fond of talking about. We should be glad to see some means introduced by which Chinese permanently resident here might become British subjects but we believe there are comparatively few who would avail themselves of the privilege since most of the native residents here have no intention of making the colony their permanent home, but like the Europeans, look forward to returning to their native places when they have amassed a competency. When this is borne in mind the hollowness of the memorial as an expression of loyalty becomes at once apparent. It is true that the Chinese might be very glad to have the right of residing in their small native villages in the interior, and at the same time be able to claim British protection, but if any considerable number adopted this course the task imposed upon England would be a most serious one, and one likely to lead to annoying complications. To this subject we shall revert on another occasion.

The folly of inflicting five and ten cent fines at the Police Court could not have been more strikingly illustrated than in the High Street murder case. One of the witnesses at the inquest deposed that he heard the second prisoner say that as the fine inflicted upon him for fighting was so trifling, he would go and obtain some men from Wanchi and fight again. The result of that determination to "fight again" was a fatal one. A more significant comment on the evil of petty fines could not be imagined. We have more than once denounced this absurd and dangerous lenity towards certain classes of offenders as being eminently calculated to encourage crime, but apparently without avail. It is to be hoped that the deplorable outcome of the bamboo fight of the 25th instant will teach the Acting Magistrate the impropriety of awarding inadequate sentences. If this system of encouraging offenders to do wrong be persisted in the Authorities will incur a serious responsibility. Sufficient mischief has been done already, and it is about time that a return to the old practice of inflicting substantial punishments was made.

The Blaize Prince left Sydney, N.S.W., for Shanghai on the 5th instant.

We are informed by the agents (Messrs. Gibb, Livington & Co.) that the steamer Normandy, from Australia, left Singapore yesterday for this port.

Writing on the 19th instant, our Bangkok correspondent says that he reads, while visiting the C. and J. Trading Co., that the Chinese, from the order of the day at that port, it being the gale time of the year there.

We are informed by the Agents (Messrs. Butterfield & Swire) that the Ocean Steamship Company's steamer Agamemnon, from Liverpool, left Singapore for this port yesterday morning.

The report that the Viceroy of the Two Kwangs had received a letter from General Li Yung-hai is repeated. This time it is stated that the letter arrived yesterday morning at Canton.

A match at half ball will be played on the Cricket Ground this afternoon, commencing at two o'clock between the members of the Cricket Club and the officers of the U.S.S. Zouave and H.M. Ships *Magpie* and *Nightingale*.

The beautiful weather of the past week has brought out the yachts, and they are now nearly all in the river. The steamer *Agamemnon*, *Admiral*, *Leander*, have already been under way for short trips (the last two indeed have circumnavigated the island) and although some of the vessels are dressed in old suits still, we believe that entirely new suits are being made for them by our local Lapthorne, Mr. W. Dolan. The Honorary Secretary of the Yacht Club informs us that the opening cruise of the yacht belonging to the members of the *Agamemnon* and the *Zouave* to assemble on the R.N. Coralshead at Kowloon Point at half past one o'clock. The opening cruise last year was very successful, and we hope that the success may be repeated this season. The date for the first match has not yet been fixed, but as soon as the "flyers" have stretched their new wings we shall no doubt be advised of the opening of the ball. From what we hear the best box may win, we also hope that the losers may be so close up of the finish as to warrant the determination to "try again."

The Chinese in California would seem to be using rather tall talk. An article entitled "Why should the Chinese go?" has been published in a San Francisco weekly, signed "Wang Chang Lin," a professed Chinaman, and a young Frenchman. The corps was not multilated, with the exception that the head was off. The settlers in the neighbourhood who were saved are Monsr. Daly, Bodden, Bolot, Dansey, Anne Gayon, Leeser, and Pitt.

The Royal English Opera Company will repeat their performance of "Léocadie's comic opera "Girafe-Girofle" at the Theatre Royal this evening, when Miss Eliza may will appear in the dual title rôle.

In answer to His Worship, witness said I had a search warrant to search anything on the lighter.

Witness continued. The bag produced I found on a shelf in the cabin of the *Brisbane*, with five sovereigns, two or three dollars, and four cent pieces, were his property. The other contained £4 10s. in gold and 23 lbs. in silver, and one penny, which was claimed by the prisoner. The keys were also attached to it.

The bag which the police took belonged to me.

In the box was a purse containing five gold coins, two or three dollars, and four cent pieces, and some papers. I was not aware that the prisoner was in the box, and he perhaps put it in. He asked me for the key, so I gave it him. I do not know what he wanted. He did not give me a cash-box. He gave me the gold coins for some cigars that he had sold for me.

His Worship remanded the case until Friday at two o'clock p.m.

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